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## Understanding Child Find: Rights of Homeschooled and Private School Students in Illinois

### What is Child Find?

**Child Find** is a requirement under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires school districts to locate, identify, and evaluate children who may have disabilities and need special education services.

Child Find applies to:

- Public school students
- Private school students
- Religious school students
- Homeschooled students

### Does Child Find Apply to Homeschooled and Private School Students?

**Yes.** Illinois school districts must identify and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities, even if they attend a private school or are homeschooled.

### What Are School District Responsibilities?

School districts must:

- Inform families about Child Find services
- Accept and respond to evaluation requests
- Conduct evaluations at no cost to families
- Determine eligibility for special education services
- Follow state and federal timelines

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## How Do Parents Request an Evaluation?

Parents should submit a written request to the school district explaining their concerns about their child's learning, behavior, communication, or development.

A medical diagnosis is **not required** to request an evaluation.

## What Happens If My Child Qualifies?

Students enrolled in public school may receive services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Homeschooled and private school students may be eligible for services through the district's equitable services or proportionate share plan, depending on available resources and services.

## Key Fact

A child does **not** lose the right to be evaluated for a disability because they are homeschooled or attend a private school.

### Resources for Families

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeschool.aspx>

Illinois Child Find Project

<https://www.childfind-idea-il.us>

Parent Center Hub

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org>

U.S. Department of Education – IDEA Child Find

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea>

Family Matters PTIC

<https://www.fmptic.org>

## Need Help?

Contact Family Matters PTIC at **866-436-7842** or visit [www.fmptic.org](http://www.fmptic.org) for free assistance understanding your rights and navigating the special education process.

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